THE BAPTIST MAGAZINE.

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"Whatever is designed to fit *every thing* will fit nothing *well*."
DR. JOHNSON.

"Names are intended to distinguish Things." Our Work is called THE BAPTIST MAGAZINE because it is intended to be a Repository for the Baptists' use.

Sketches of Baptist History.

SECTION II. INSTITUTION OF BAPTISM BY JESUS CHRIST.

MOSES was a faithful servant in all his house. God made him king in Jesurun, and the laws, statutes, and ordinances of the Jewish œconomy were copied from what he had seen in the holy Mount. The inspired writers inform us that Christ is faithful in like manner; but *as a Son over his own house.* He is Lord and Law-giver in the Christian Dispensation; and so much, and no more, and no less, and no otherwise than he has appointed, is our obedience required. This remark is especially applicable to the ordinances of his Worship, and the signs by which he sets forth our communion and fellowship with himself.

Having testified that the Baptism of John *was from heaven,* he added nothing more respecting that ordinance till the minds of his disciples were prepared to receive his instructions; for we are taught to believe that he unfolded to them the Glory of his kingdom *as they were able to bear it.* The Baptism John administered to pious Jews *prepared a people* ready for the divine purposes as they respected the seed of Abraham; but it was not an easy thing to eradicate jewish prejudices even from our Lord's immediate followers. His final instructions to this effect were deferred till after his resurrection.

Before his death he promised his Apostles that after he was risen he would meet them in Galilee. The Angel who appeared to the women at the Sepulchre directed them to *go quickly and tell his disciples* that he was risen from the dead, and was going before them into Galilee, and *there they should see him.* As they were going

with this message Jesus himself met them, and repeated the direction, *go and tell my brethren that they go into Galilee, and there they shall see me.* In the 40 days between his resurrection and ascension he often *shewed himself alive to his disciples by many infallible proofs, and spoke to them of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God.* Baptism was one of those things; and of this, and the extension of its benefits to Gentiles as well as Jews, he took occasion to speak in the most public manner on the Mountain in Galilee, to *above five hundred brethren at once. Jesus came, and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the World.* Here is the whole *Law of Baptism* given by Jesus Christ immediately before his ascension into heaven; since which, it is not pretended that he has made any new communications on the subject. Here then is the authority by which all Christians ought to regulate their practice respecting this ordinance.

Some affirm that our Lord here authorises the Baptism of Infants though they are not mentioned, and there is not in all the New Testament either precept or example for such a practice. In reply to their arguments in support of their opinion, we have to observe, that the Christian Religion bears this inscription on its face, that it is intended chiefly for plain men, who cannot be expected to enter into a course of hypothetical reasonings or verbal criticisms; it is therefore established on facts, which, while they invite the strictest scrutiny, are supported by evidence that renders them easy of demonstration. In the case before us, it is observable that the order runs, *teach all nations, baptizing them.* This language speaks clearly the meaning of the law-giver: the style is popular, and the sense plain, it must mean either baptize whole nations, or such of all nations as receive your instructions and desire to be baptized. The former is too gross to be admitted, because it cannot be effected without force, our minds therefore turn to the other, as the plain and true sense. Neither fraud nor force have any place in the principles of Christianity; nor does it suit the dignity of the Lord Jesus to take one man by conviction and his ten children by surprize.

To others it seems that Jesus addressed these words only to his Apostles, and hence they reason that none but Apostles or apostolic men, *their successors,* have any right to baptize. But this notion is encumbered with insuperable difficulties, for it is certain that, even during the lives of the Apostles, many others baptized. Philip the *deacon* baptized the Samaritans; Peter and John going after to confer the extraordinary gifts of the holy Spirit. Paul was baptized at Damascus, or as he expresses it, *buried* by baptism into death,

when no Apostle was there. While Paul was at Corinth many of the Corinthians *hearing, believed,* and *were baptized*; but *he baptized none of them except Crispus and Gaius, and the family of Stephanus.* Some others (not Apostles) baptized the rest. When Peter went to open the kingdom of heaven to proselyted Gentiles at Cæsarea, he did not baptize them himself, but *he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord;* which it seems was done at a convenient opportunity by *some of the brethren of the circumcision who believed,* and who had accompanied him. Besides this, it might be enquired, who are the *Successors* of the Apostles? Perhaps Paul's rule to the Corinthians may be applicable to baptizing as well as teaching, *Ye may all prophesy one by one that all may learn and all may be comforted.* Wheresoever God has imparted the gifts suited to the work, there also exists the right to enlarge the kingdom of Christ by teaching and baptizing others: and this is in perfect unison with the whole spirit and temper of Christianity.

The words of our Lord cannot literally apply as a law to all Christians, nor probably to every one who was present when they were spoken; but they were adapted to the existing state of things, and are applicable in a general way, as a precedent, to all ages and circumstances of his Church in the World. He had foretold the destruction of Jerusalem, that the Jews should be *led away captive into all nations,* that his disciples should be *hated of all nations;* and that the Gospel should be *preached among all nations;* but he had not yet instructed them plainly in his design to unite Jews and Gentiles into one body, and that baptism was to be administered to individuals of *all nations,* who believing his doctrine, were thus put in possession of principles suited to the union it was his intention to effect. He therefore now directed them patiently to submit to the wise providence of God, and carefully improve the event of their dispersion among the nations, so as to promote the grand design of his coming into the world, that all nations might be instructed, and participate with themselves, the unspeakable benefits of his Religion. The direction was an illustrious display of *good-will to men* combined with *all power in heaven and earth,* and the event discovered the wisdom of the plan, which stands an example worthy of imitation by all Christians in all ages, even to the end of the World, to bear with them wherever they go, the marks of discipleship to Christ, and concerning him to be *living epistles seen and read of all men,* publishing *every where that all men should repent.*

There are others, who so explain the words as to set aside baptism as a perpetual institution of Jesus Christ. These affirm that the words *to the end of the World,* should be rendered *to the end of the age,* which, say they, may apply either to the Jewish polity, and so it expired at the destruction of Jerusalem; or to the age of the Apostles, and so it ended with the last Apostle. Baptism, they aver, was

only a temporary institute, and ought not to be administered to all Christians now. To *Pagans*, who embrace Christianity, they admit it may be proper, but not to the children of Christians. But if we admit this rendering, it would be most natural to suppose that Jesus dated by *his own œconomy*, and appointed baptism to continue *to the end of that age*, that is, to the end of the christian dispensation: for the promise of his presence is commensurate with the continuance of teaching and baptizing. Besides, the New Testament makes no mention of any such cessation of baptism in the Churches of Christ; and it is not good to be *wise above what is written*, especially when we consider that the Christian œconomy was declared *perfect* while baptism was in practice; *Heaven and Earth shall pass away, but my word shall not pass away. Abide in me. If my words abide in you, ye shall be my disciples.* Accordingly, Christians in early ages continued to baptize, and were exhorted to *hold fast the profession of their faith, having their bodies washed with pure water:* and others were *commended* because they *kept the ordinances as they were delivered.*

Connected with the various notions which have been entertained respecting the meaning of our Lord when he directed his disciples to *teach all nations, baptizing them*, we present our readers a few thoughts as they occur.

1. We invite their consideration, whether the baptism of b abes has not effected a *change*, operating greatly against the evidences of our holy Religion, by exhibiting whole Na tions of Christians, who have all been forced to profess the Religion of Jesus without their knowledge or consent? It may be reasonably as ked in such circumstances, whether Christianity will not bear ad ult examination? or whether the children of Christians have less right to judge for themselves than the first converts had? In the Apostle's days it was some argument in favour of the truth and efficacy of the Gospel, that an historian could relate, *Multitudes were added both of men and women. The word of God increased, and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem, and a great company of the Priests were obedient to the faith. The same day there were added unto them about* 3000 *souls, &c.* but the baptism of infants excludes such arguments in the present day; by this means whole Nations are become nominal Christians, so that there is no world, but all church!

This circumstance has also in a great degree deprived Christianity of that forcible argument resulting from the holy influence of Gospel doctrine. The few, who *adorn the doctrine of God their Saviour*, and *shine as lights of the World*, are lost among the vast multitudes of wicked characters, with whom they are confounded, as bearing the same name, and professing the same general Principles. Of what national Church can it be said, that the people are *holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from Sinners?* What nation, if they observe the direction of the apostolic Epistles, durst claim

a letter directed *to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints?* Some have thought that to the *change* thus produced, a great part of the present abounding infidelity is to be attributed: and it must be confessed that a Christianity of this description admits of no defence.

2. We invite those who would confine the right to administer baptism to the Apostles and *their Successors* to advert to the history of priesthood and priest-craft, and as it is utterly impossible to make good the line of succession without going thro' the papal hierarchy, we wish them to find out, if they can, in what respect the temper and spirit of that *abomination* bear any evidence of relation to *the mind that was in Christ*, or to the doctrine and conduct of our Lord and his Apostles. If they can spare a thought or two on the present condition of that once numerous, learned, wealthy, and powerful Church called *catholic*, now trembling in the day of her visitation, it may excite a salutary alarm, and an inclination to come out from the midst of her, to have nothing to do with any of her abominations, lest they be partakers of her plagues.

3. We request those who set aside the Baptism instituted by Jesus Christ, to inform us what there is in it injurious to piety and virtue, or inconsistent with the improvement which a good man ought to promote? Take away this ordinance, and where is the line of separation between the world and the church? Why should believers be deprived of the honour and pleasure of confessing Christ in the way of his appointment? or why deprive the young convert of the powerful motives to holiness arising from a voluntary putting on of Christ by baptism? The authority of Scripture cannot be quoted for laying aside baptism; no reasons can be urged from the fitness of things; to say the least, it must he hazardous to reject a practice, which the Lord Jesus himself honoured by his example, and which it appears he left to his disciples that they might follow his steps. There can be no impropriety in following Christ in an imitable case, as baptism is allowed to be, nor is there any probability of placing Christianity in a better state than that in which he left it. It is true that Baptism by immersion is in modern times, in some churches, fallen into neglect and contempt, but if that be a motive with any for disowning it, such Christians may be thankful they did not live in the days of Jesus himself, who was more despised by Jews, than any of his institutions ever were by Christians.

Z.

Address to the Baptists.

To the Editor of the Baptist Magazine.

Sir,

As a real friend to the Baptist Denomination will you allow me to avail myself of the opportunity your Magazine affords of freely addressing my brethren on some points which appear to me essential to their prosperity and honour, for both of which I feel deeply concerned.

You are, my dear brethren, not only distinguished from the world at large by a profession of the religion of Jesus Christ, but also from many of his professed followers by your sentiments and practice in respect to the article of Christian Baptism. In this particular you do not, I am persuaded, aim at singularity, but at a greater conformity to the will of your divine Lord; a motive truly honourable, and which, if duly regarded by our brethren who differ from us in this point, would at least prevail upon them to give us an attentive hearing. Allow me then to suggest to you some pieces of advice relative to what is not only of great importance in itself, but what may serve to render our motives and views clear and evident.

1. Let it be our first concern to cultivate true religion in general.—To maintain an habitual intercourse with the great God, through Jesus Christ the mediator, under the influence and guidance of the Holy Spirit, and to exhibit such a conduct in the church, the family, and the world, as may render us blessings to society and ornaments to the christian name.

As this religion is the true glory of our rational nature, the genuine impression of the gospel upon our hearts, and the only pledge of future complete felicity, so if we are destitute of it, however correct our sentiments on any one point of doctrine or worship, we shall be disapproved of God, and, to use the words of the apostle, be like sounding brass, and a tinkling cymbal. Or tho' we may not be wholly destitute of those graces and virtues which constitute true piety, yet if they shine with a fainter lustre in us than in our brethren of a different persuasion, we shall not only ourselves sustain an irreparable loss, but become the occasion of additional prejudice in them against our particular views, and so sink the credit of our denomination in general. Men will scarcely believe us sincere in those things which to them appear, at best doubtful, while they think they perceive manifest traces of indifference to what is by all allowed to be of the greatest and most indisputable obligation and importance.

And yet, evident as this is, we may be in danger of abating in our zeal for the attainments of religion in general, by paying eager attention to some one particular point, especially if that point be frequently and sternly opposed, and so call forth much of our energy in its defence. Such is adult baptism. It is the leading feature of our

denomination as a distinct body of professing christians; it has been frequently opposed; and is what we have often been necessitated to defend, and may probably be obliged to do so again. On this account we may be imperceptibly led to pay such a disproportioned attention to it as is inconsistent with the regards necessary to the cultivation of the various other branches of evangelical piety. Of this, brethren, let us continually beware. Let us remember that whatever importance we may attach to the subject of baptism, or any other point, if other point there be, in which we differ from our fellow christians, that faith and love, that prayer to God, and benevolence to Men, that the various duties of social and civil life, are of such importance that they can, on no account whatever, be at any time dispensed with, without the greatest injury to our souls, and the greatest dishonour to our profession.

2. Let us strictly adhere to evangelical truth.—to the doctrines of scripture which we believe to be very properly represented in the confession of faith set forth by our brethren in London in the year 1689, to which the conductors of this Magazine have so frankly avowed their attachment, and which in the main correspond with the principles of the reformed churches in general.

To these doctrines let us brethren, adhere, fully satisfied that they are the doctrines of God our Saviour. Let us adhere to them firmly, and not waver in our assent to them tho' they be assailed with violence or ridicule. The more they are opposed the clearer will their evidence appear, and the more the opposition to them is examined the weaker will it grow. God has set his seal to these doctrines, by rendering the preaching of them effectual to the conversion and salvation of millions. But let our adherence be extensive and proportionate. Do not let us select a few favourite topics to the neglect of the rest, but pay a due regard to them all. And above all let us regard them not as matters of debate or speculation, but as doctrines intended and highly calculated to affect our hearts and regulate our lives. Let them not only be inserted in our creed, not only be echoed with zeal and affection from our pulpits, but let them reign in our hearts, and from thence diffuse their vital and holy influence over all our actions.

As we do most sincerely believe these doctrines to be the spring and support of experimental and practical religion, so we can entertain little hopes of that religion prevailing amongst us, if they be either gainsayed or wholly or partially deserted, or held as matters of angry debate or cold speculation. Nor is it less evident that our pædobaptist Brethren, by many of whom these sacred truths have been ably stated, and zealously and successfully propagated, will entertain very unfavourable apprehensions of us in case we depart from them. Christ is the author and substance of all truth, as well as the great Law-giver in his church, and if we disregard him in the former

capacity, we shall hardly be able to persuade them, if we can indeed satisfy ourselves that we revere him in the latter.

3. Let us labour to convert sinners to God. Believing as we do that adult Baptism by immersion is the only Baptism approved by Jesus Christ, we cannot be thought indifferent to its interest. On the contrary we wish its more extensive spread, we wish all the Lord's people were Baptists, as we verily believe they will be in the latter Day. Nor can we think our Brethren who differ from us on this point will be surprized or offended at such frank and unequivocal assertions. They cannot think it unkind in us to wish them more conformed to their great Master's will, which we really think would be the case in respect to baptism, did they but see and practice as we do. And for the same reason we cannot think ourselves to blame, nor can they consistently blame us, for using just and honourable means for bringing others over to our views and practices.

Still however, let me be allowed to say, that this should be only a secondary object. Our first and most zealous attempt should be on a thoughtless and perishing world, in order to turn its inhabitants from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God. For this purpose was the Gospel sent into the world, and the gospel ministry instituted, and no particular circumstance of professing Christians can excuse them in the neglect of it. Our being Baptists by no means exempts us from obligations to obey our Lord's command.—"Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature." As far as we are successful in the execution of this his commission, so far we do the most substantial good; we are instrumental in saving souls from death, and hiding a multitude of sins; we in the most important sense enlarge the kingdom of our Redeemer, whether the fruits of our labour fall in with our views of Baptism or not. But of this we have little reason to doubt. They will be open to conviction, and unbiassed by previous opinions, will clearly perceive the meaning of their Lord's injunctions, and under the sweet energetic influence of divine love, so generally felt in that early period of their experience, will cheerfully obey them. Thus while we are most zealously intent on the first object, we shall more easily and effectually accomplish the second; and that too with this additional advantage of enlarging our Churches by converts from the world, and not by detaching Members from other Christian Communities; a circumstance, tho' sometimes necessary, in order that such persons may follow the dictates of their own consciences, is always to a feeling mind accompanied with some degree of regret. But should we on the other hand bend our attention chiefly to the extending of our particular views, we should not only, most likely in a great measure fail to accomplish our object, but in case we are successful, should only obtain a secondary good. i. e. we should in one instance improve the sentiments and practice of those whom we

sciences, believed were already in a state of salvation: we should only hew and polish stones which others had dug out of the quarry.

It cannot fail to afford great satisfaction to every friend of our denomination, to reflect that the spirit of zealous exertion here recommended has prevailed of late to a good degree among us. The Mission to India is one very remarkable and happy instance of it; so are many towns and villages in our own Land into which the Gospel has been successfully introduced by our Ministers and Friends; as also many Churches of considerable standing which have been within a few years greatly replenished with Members coming directly from a thoughtless, guilty world, the fruits of the labours of their Pastors, which labours are still directed to the same important object. But let us not, my Brethren, rest here; on the contrary let our past successes be so many stimuluses to future exertions, till all who take knowledge of Baptists be compelled to own, that they are a people not merely zealous for their own particular tenets, but solicitous for the advancement of the Redeemer's kingdom in the World at large.

4. Let us exercise a spirit of genuine candour. I say, genuine candour, in distinction from that affected indifference to sentiment which is sometimes honoured with the name of candour, but which if it be more than mere affectation, may be more properly denominated cowardice, or at least an unwarrantable compliance with the authority of others, bordering on a relinquishment of the authority of God. There is, however, such a virtue as candour, which arises from undissembled love, and consists in entertaining the most favourable sentiments of men's characters, principles and conduct, that truth and uprightness will admit. This virtue it becomes us as Baptists, to possess and exercise in an eminent degree. We differ from our brethren of other persuasions, it is true, in respect to the article of Baptism, and it may be from some of them in other points; but is that any just reason for prejudice against those excellent labours of theirs, on almost every subject of divine truth, and every branch of evangelical piety, which the past ages or the present have produced? Should we not be unjust to the dead and to the living, as well as deprive ourselves of one of the greatest advantages for religious improvement, if we neglect the elaborate performances of Owen and Flavel, of Watts and Doddridge, of Romaine, of Robinson, of Bogue, and many others I might name, who by their writings, as well as their preaching, have rendered the most essential service to the cause of Christ? We cannot, it is allowed, wish success to the cause of Pædo-baptism as such, but should we not justly be charged with a want of candour were we not to wish success to the efforts of our Pædo-baptist Brethren, in promoting the spread of the Gospel, and converting Sinners to God? Much more if we

regarded such efforts with a jealous eye, or imputed them to a spirit of party, or attempted, directly or indirectly, to throw obstructions in their way?

It is admitted, we think our brethren act contrary to the command and example of our Lord Jesus Christ, in administering Baptism to babes, and administering it by any other mode than that of Immersion. But should we not violate the laws of Candour if we openly avow or secretly insinuate that they themselves view the subject in such a light? Ought we to impute such unworthy motives to men who have given in every other instance, the most decided proofs of sincerity and disinterestedness, as to suppose that in this instance they practise contrary to what they believe to be true and scriptural? Surely no. Whatever difficulty we feel in accounting for their conduct, we ought not to account for it in such away as this. Rather let us leave it unaccounted for, among the secrets, on which it is his prerogative alone to decide, who searcheth the heart and trieth the reins, and who will shortly call both them and us to his bar.

Forgive me, Brethren, for detaining your attention so long. I speak out of the fulness of my heart, ardently desiring the prosperity of that denomination to which I have the honour to belong, to whose advantage this publication is more immediately devoted. May we all drink into the spirit breathed in the concluding lines of the Poem with which the first number of this work is introduced, to which, whatever may be his sentiment of the former stanzas, every real Christian will with heart-felt pleasure subscribe.

Nor let the bason or the flood,
Divide the purchase of that blood,
Where all must plunge—or die.

W. S.——

The Law of Retaliation.

Judge not, that ye be not judged. For with what judgement ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again. *Matt.* vii, 1, 2.

These words contain a caution against censoriousness and cruelty, enforced by a motive which is derived from the law of retaliation. The ancient Romans had their *lex talionis*, but I shall confine myself chiefly to the Scriptures. The Scriptures abound with phrases which allude to it, and with facts which exemplify it. "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed.—And if any mischief follow, then thou shalt give life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, burning for burning, wound for wound, stripe for stripe.—Even as I have seen, they that plow iniquity and sow wickedness, reap the same.—He made a pit

and digged it, and is fallen into the ditch which he made. His mischief shall return upon his own head, and his violent dealing shall come down upon his own pate.—Woe to thee that spoilest, and thou wast not spoiled; and dealest treacherously, and they dealt not treacherously with thee! When thou shalt cease to spoil, thou shalt be spoiled; and when thou hast made an end to deal treacherously, they shall deal treacherously with thee.—The children also of Judah and the children of Jerusalem have ye sold unto the Grecians, that ye might remove them far from their border. Behold I will raise them out of the place whither ye have sold them, and will return your recompence upon your own head. And I will sell your sons and your daughters into the hands of the children of Judah, and they shall sell them to the Sabeans, to a people far off: for the Lord hath spoken it.—Therefore it is come to pass, that as he cried, and they would not hear; so they cried, and I would not hear, saith the Lord of hosts. Put up again thy sword into his place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword.—He shall have judgement without mercy, that hath shewed no mercy.—For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, if any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book, And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city and from the things which are written in this book. "*Gen.* ix, 6. *Ex.* xxi, 23, 25 *Job* iv, 8. *Ps.* vii, 15, 16. compared with *Prov.* xxvi, 27 and *Eccl.* x, 8, 9. *Isa.* xxxiii, 1. *Joel* iii, 6, 7, 8. *Zech.* vii, 13. *Matt.* xxvi, 52. *James* ii, 13. *Rev.* xxii, 18, 19. See also 2 *Tim.* ii. 12. *Rev.* xvi, 6.

Scripture Facts.

1. The men of *Sodom* sin gluttonously with fulness of bread: four kings take away their provisions. Their eyes are full of uncleanness: they are smitten with blindness. They burn with unnatural lust: they are burnt with miraculous fire. *Gen.* xiv, 11.

2. *Jacob*, in the early part of his life, is guilty of deception. Mark how in future life his troubles arise from deception. First, he is deceived with Leah instead of Rachel; next, Laban deceives him by changing his wages ten times. But the most affecting instance is that of his own children's deceiving him when they brought to him Joseph's bloody coat. *Gen.* xxxvii, 31.

3. *Joseph's brethren* smart under this scourge in their imprisonment. "And they said one to another, we are verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the anguish of his soul, when he besought us, and we would not hear; therefore is this distress come upon us. And Reuben answered them, saying, spake I not unto you,

saying, Do not sin against the Child, and ye would not hear? therefore, behold also, his blood is required." *Gen.* xlii, 21, 22.

4. *Pharaoh* refuses to liberate Israel, God's first-born. "And it came to pass that at midnight the Lord smote all the first-born in the land of Egypt." Pharaoh publishes an edict to drown the Hebrew male children: in the event he is drowned himself. *Ex.* xii and xiv.

5. The *Egyptians* withhold wages from the Israelites: the Israelites go away with their Jewels. *Ex.* xi, 3. xii, 36.

6. *Nadab and Abihu* offer strange fire to the Lord: strange fire from the Lord burns them to death. *Lev.* x, 2.

7. *Adonibezek* furnishes a striking instance. "And Adoni-bezek fled: and they pursued after him and caught him, and cut off his thumbs and his great toes. And Adoni-bezek said, three score and ten kings, having their thumbs and their great toes cut off, gathered their meat under my table: as I have done, so God hath requited me. And they brought him to Jerusalem, and there he died." *Jud.* i, 6, 7. *See an admirable sermon on this passage, in Bp. Kidder's twelve sermons.* 1697.

8. The author of the book of Judges makes the following reflections on the case of *Abimelech* and the *Shechemites.* "Thus God rendered the wickedness of Abimelech, which he did unto his father, in slaying his seventy brethren: and all the evil of the men of Shechem did God render upon their heads." *Jud.* ix, 56, 57.

9. *Agag* was a bloody king of Amalek. "And Samuel said, as thy sword hath made women childless, so shall thy mother be childless among women. And Samuel hewed Agag in pieces before the Lord in Gilgal. 1 *Sam.* xv, 33.

10. *Abner* kills Asahel, Joab's brother: Joab kills Abner. 2 *Sam.* iii, 27.

11. *Joab* was David's nephew, and the generalissimo of his Army; a brave, but a bloody man. He consented to Abner's cruel and wanton proposal of a battle between twelve of David's and twelve of Ishbosheth's men. He ordered innocent Uriah into the front of the battle. When Absalom hung by the hair of his head in the oak, he took three darts and thrust them thro' his heart.—David, on his death bed required Solomon to punish him for the murder of Abner and Amasa. Accordingly, Benaiah stabs him at Solomon's command. 1 *Kings.* ii, 34.

12. *David's* adultery was punished, first, by the incest of his son Amnon with Tamar; afterwards by Absalom's sinning with his fathers's wives in the sight of all Israel. Was he guilty of murder? *The sword shall not depart from his house.* First, the adulterous child dies; then Amnon is murdered at a feast; afterwards Absalom is stabbed while hanging alive in the oak. 2 *Sam.* xii, 10.

13. *Jeroboam* stretches forth his hand against a man of God: in

a moment God stretches forth his hand against *him*. "And it came to pass, when king Jeroboam heard the saying of the man of God, which had cried against the altar in Bethel, that he put forth his hand from the altar, saying, lay hold on him. And his hand which he put forth against him, dried up, so that he could not pull it in again to him." 1 *Kings* xiii, 4.

14. *Ahab's* fate is remarkable. "Hast thou killed and also taken possession?—Thus saith the Lord, in the place where dogs licked the blood of Naboth, shall dogs lick thy blood, even thine." 1 *Kings* xxi, 19. *see also ch.* xxii, 38.

15. *Haman* prepares a gallows for Mordecai, fifty cubits high: upon that gallows Haman is hanged himself. *Esth*, vii, 16.

16. *Daniel's accusers* get him thrown into a den of lions; into that very den they themselves are thrown. *Daniel* vi, 24.

17. *Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego* are cast into a burning fiery furnace: the flames of that very furnace consume the *executioners*, while the servants of God are unhurt. *Dan.* iii.

18. *The Jews* put Jesus to death by crucifixion. The mob exclaimed, "Crucify him, crucify him," About forty years after this, they had crucifixion enough. They were crucified, it is said, five hundred in a day, till there was a scarcity of wood for crosses. They bought Jesus for a trifle, (about three pounds fifteen shillings) and they were sold for a trifle themselves. They put Jesus to death at the feast of the passover; at the same feast, afterwards, they were destroyed themselves.

Many other illustrations may be found in the history of the world. I shall mention a few of them.

19. *Procustes* was stretched to death by Theseus (as Plutarch tells us) upon his bed: and that was the kind of death he had been wont to inflict upon others. *Bp. Kidder.*

20. Eusebius tells us that *Maximinus's* eyes dropt out of his head before he died; and adds that he did but endure therein that punishment himself which he had formerly devised against the christians. *idem.*

21. The principal persons concerned in the *Gun-powder-plot*, were maimed or destroyed by gun-powder, at a house where they attempted to take refuge. *Hume's Hist. of England.*

22. *Charles* IX *of France* made the canals of Paris stream with Protestant blood: he died soon after, blood streaming from all parts of his body.

23. *Pope Alexander the sixth* unawares drank of the poisoned cup which he had prepared for others.

24. What multitudes were put to death by the revolutionary tribunal of France, under the direction of *Robespierre!* Is it not remarkable that by that very tribunal he fell?

52 *Austria and Prussia* took an active part in the dismemberment of Poland: have they not since been dismembered themselves?

Reflections.

1. There is certainly a Providence that takes accurate notice of human affairs. Who can believe that the facts which have here been recited, were all matters of chance? *Verily, there is a God that judgeth in the earth.*

2. God is holy, and the Lord revengeth. He will punish sin wherever he finds it. He hates the sins of his own people as much as those of the children of the wicked one.

3. Divine wisdom appears in thus forcing a man to read his sin in his punishment. It appears to be a method well adapted to strike the conscience. It places the sin in a glaring tremendous light. It awakens all the keenest feelings of the soul in a manner which perhaps no other way could effect.—"We read of a father, who being dragged about the streets by his son, he bid his son stop at a certain door, that being the very place unto which he had formerly dragged his father." *Bp. Kidder's sermons. p. 72. see also Flavel on Providence, p. 50. edit.* 1801.

4. Let sinners hear and fear, and do no more so wickedly, lest God should execute this law of retaliation in a dreadful manner. *Because I have called and ye refused—then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer. Prov.* i, 24—31. *Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.* 2 *Cor.* vi, 2. But if now by your conduct you say *Depart from us, for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways.* Christ will, according to this law, say in his turn, *Depart from me ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. Job* xxi, 14. *Matt.* xxx, 41.

Bromley, near Bow. *W. N.*

*Conversation between a Socinian & Calvinistic Minister on the subject of Everlasting Punishment.**

A. SO, my old Friend, you are still a follower of John Calvin?

C. I should wish to be a follower of no man *as such*, but as what are usually called Calvinistic sentiments best accord with my Faith, I have little objection to the Name you have bestowed upon me.

A. I really thought you possessed more sense, and as I still entertain a good opinion of your intellects, I expect we shall sometime have you amongst us. But now, how can you be so foolish as to suppose that a good God should determine to render a part of his creatures for ever miserable?

* This Conversation really took place.

C. I have some objection to your using the word *determine* in this representation of that sentiment which I certainly do believe and profess. By your mode of employing the term in this connection, you would impute to us an idea that God *resolves* upon the misery of a part of mankind totally irrespective of their demerit.

A. What then you really suppose that it is consistent with divine Goodness and Justice to make millions of men eternally miserable; and that the sins and errors of their lives can truly deserve such a melancholy fate. Ah! C—— Unitarianism is a far more consistent and benevolent system!

C. Such, doubtless, is your of view it, but your question appears to originate not only in mistaken ideas of the Goodness and Justice of God, but in a misconception of the evil of Sin. It is not an error or venial fault, arising from the inadvertencies of an imperfect Nature, but extremely criminal and desperately wicked: the offspring of a vicious and unspeakably depraved heart.

A. Well, but this does not answer my remark on the violence, the outrage, committed against the character of a good and just God by your statement.

C. I believe I should be fully justified in merely appealing to the language of the scriptures on this subject, and asserting that whether we can perceive the goodness and justice of it or not, *it is revealed*, and God will eventually and satisfactorily explain his own conduct.

A. Yes, yes, appeals to Scripture may be made on both sides, let me be indulged with your reasons.

C. In reply then to your objection to eternal punishment as contrary to divine goodness and justice, let me remark two things.

1. Mankind are forewarned, nay, Heaven and its Ministers remonstrate, and Mercy stands at the gates of Light, *waiting to be gracious*, If a King were, for some petty offence, to publish a Manifesto, importing his determination to *exile* the offender, it could not be called unjust or unmerciful to do it, because the individual was forewarned, and might have escaped the punishment, by avoiding the crime. And,

2. Who is the most proper judge of the Demerit of actions, God, or the criminal? To say the *Criminal*, is absurd, because self-love would not only misjudge the case, but super-induce the most favourable verdict. No one would *choose* punishment, merely for the sake of being *just* to *himself*. You, perhaps, call your sins trifling offences, venial errors, or at most only deserving temporal punishment. By what authority do you *make* this decision? Have you, or can you fully estimate the whole quantum of atrocity in sins which you varnish over by so soft a name? Have you the balances of omniscience by which to ascertain the measure, weight and demerit of every transgression? Or suppose the estimate is not formed upon such

principles and proportions, can you call *that* trifling which introduced disorder into a peaceful and happy universe, which crucified the Lord of Glory, and which God uniformly declares to be the abhorrence of his soul? But I must repeat it, my belief of the Doctrine of Everlasting Punishment does not so much arise from the reason of things as from the language of *him who cannot lie.*

A. Here I do not hesitate to decide the question, and to be short with you, let me hear *one* passage which really establishes your sentiment.

C. I could produce many which speak of *Unquenchable* fire, *everlasting* punishment, and the worm that *never dieth*.

A. With respect to these, they can ill support your notions, especially the latter. Suppose I had a tree in my garden exceedingly infested with insects or a particular species of worm. I go day after day and smoke the tree, the worm continually falls and as certainly returns, so that my labour seems fruitless. This I should call a worm that never died, because it was constantly renewed; which may represent God's occasional manifestations of displeasure, or that the punishment continues for others, though the individual (which perhaps may be the case) is annihilated.

C. If indeed you were to talk thus, I should say you were beside yourself. In common concerns you certainly would not. But as you demanded *one* passage, I particularly intended to quote *Mat.* xxx, 46. *These shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal.*"

A. You know that the Greek terms do not commonly or necessarily signify *everlasting* and *eternal* in our usual sense.

C. No I do not *know so*, but the contrary, *αἰωνιος* is a compound of *αἰει always*, and *ων being*, consequently *always being* or *endless* or *everlasting* are its proper meanings, and it is seldom used in another sense.

A. Allowing this, my opinion on the passage rests principally on the word *punishment*. There is an evident sense in which Punishment may be everlasting, and yet the fate of the individual not, as you imagine, sensibly afflictive.

C. How so?

A. Punishment does not always imply suffering, but only the infliction of an evil which may or may not take place while the individual is insensible.

C. Possibly this may be an original and abstract meaning of the term, though in the languages with which I am acquainted, it is used to express the pain, deprivation, or merited torment, inflicted as an act of legislation, upon the guilty. But how do you justify your interpretation, and in what sense do you call punishment everlasting?

A. Suppose a criminal were to be hung for some capital offence,

it might be said he suffered an *everlasting punishment*, because by putting him to death, the legislature expressed its everlasting abhorrence of his crime, and the individual would be everlastingly deprived of life and all its enjoyments.

C. I am surprized you should advance such fallacious reasoning. To say a man is punished when he is put to death is just, because in the case supposed, he *suffers* for his transgressions, which is considered as a sort of compensation to society and the laws; but to represent that such a man is *punished* a thousand years after his execution, and so by a metaphorical licence call him *everlastingly* punished, is an obvious abuse of language, and were it not for your frequent assurances to me of sincerity in the search of truth, I should think it was invented to support a defenceless system. But this passage furnishes another proof in favour of the sentiment you oppose, and ruinous of your explanation of the word punishment.

A. Let me hear it.

C. I will, but very briefly, for we must close our conversation. This verse contains a striking contrast between the final state of the Wicked, and that of the Righteous, and the terms are completely antithetical. These shall go away into *punishment*, the righteous into *life*—these into *everlasting* punishment, the righteous into life *eternal*. I know from a previous conversation, your idea of the future condition of the saints accords with my own, that it will be a state of enjoyment, or happy being, that is, *life* which shall never cease, that is, *eternal*. In this passage therefore *punishment* being opposed to *life* must signify its reverse, which is not *death*, or annihilation, because in this place, as in others, the term life is used metaphorically, not merely to denote existence, but *happy existence*. What is the direct opposite of this? Doubtless *miserable existence*. The epithet *everlasting* or *eternal* is applied to each of these modes of being, consequently the felicity of the one and the misery of the other must be equally final and interminable.

FAC.

The Importance of contending for the Truth.

Reflections on *Jude* i, 3.

Earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered to the Saints.

In the Sacred Writers we always discover a decision of Mind with regard to Divine Truths, they always had data from which they reasoned - - an infallible Standard to which they referred; all departure from this was considered as a departure from the truth, and a defence of these distinguishing Sentiments was considered as con-

tending for the Faith once delivered to the Saints. Under the *decision* to which we are invited by the Apostle, we shall offer an illustration of the subject, and endeavour to enforce that holy zeal of which the sacred Truths of the Gospel are worthy.

I. There is the *Grace* of faith, and hence faith is *the gift of God—worketh by love—overcometh the World—liveth and abideth for ever.* by faith the Christian walks, and acts, and lives. *For the Life that I now live in the flesh is a Life of faith upon the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.* There is the *Doctrine* of faith, which reveals all that pertains to a life of godliness, and which is termed the Gospel of God's Son: this is represented to us as being *delivered* from God. *We have not,* says the Apostle, *followed cunningly devised Fables, but as of Truth, as of Sincerity, so we speak in the sight of God*: hence the Apostle exhorts Timothy to *keep that which was committed to his trust.* There are many circumstances which mark the Divine delivery of it, and stamp it with the very Image of its Maker. It came at such a time when a revelation from God might reasonably be expected—its very contents bear so God-like an appearance—there is such a value and efficacy attached to it—and it is so adapted to ameliorate the circumstances of those for whom it was designed— a thousand things which ultimately stand connected with our happiness, but for this must have remained in total oblivion. Who could have ascertained the extent of transgression? Who could have devised means of Redemption? Who could have guessed at half the Glories that compose the Divine Character?

Heathens, the wisest of them, never advanced a thought half way to this, *professing themselves to be wise they became fools.* All their thoughts had respect to outward things; a tissue of fables; a mere string of allegories. The law written in men's hearts could never lead to it. "The uttermost to which that extended was making Idols and falling down and worshipping them." Advance higher, there is not an Angel in heaven that could have devised it. In order to perpetuate more durably God's mind and will (for formerly it was only delivered by dreams, oracles and visions) he with his own hand engraved his law, and then committed it to one of his faithful servants as a commencement of a work he was to continue, and which should be completing 'till one day it should be closed forever. O sacred Volume, the Image, the very thoughts of my God, I'll bind thee to my heart, tho' forced to the rejection of all beside. Who questions its being a delivery from God, when he considers the length of time it has been preserved unimpaired and entire? tis older than any writings now extant; it has seen Nations (the destruction of which it has predicted) swept away. Time has numbered its writers with the dead— The good pleasure of God our father permitted the grand subject of it to be crucified and slain—Martyrs for its defence have bled and sang sweetly in the flames—but this still lives. God is in

his providence raising up a succession of faithful ministers to unfold its sacred contents, and proportions their gifts to the explanation of its various parts; and when opponents arise, able Men fit to withstand their unhallowed attacks arise too, they accomplish as hirelings their day. *Our fathers where are they, and the prophets do they live for ever?* We have the seeds of death within ourselves, and are gradually mouldering back to dust, but this sacred volume shall still exist, and flourish until all the redeemed are nourished up to eternal Life. That it is a delivery from God, observe the manner in which it has been declared, and above all, the power and efficacy that attends it; for I not only read, but I feel; I so read as that my soul lives; *and the same God who commanded the Light to shine out of darkness, has commanded it to shine into my heart to give the light of the knowledge of the Glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.*

Consider it likewise as it regards the *Completion* of its Testimony. It was delivered *once* for all, and tho' the various parts of it remain for discussion, yet the subject matter of it is still the same, complete and perfect. Hence in the sacred scriptures you find a charge brought against some that they have departed to another Gospel, and departed from the Truth: and there is the greatest propriety in the termination of it, for all has been said which is needful, it is competent to meet all the ends for which it was designed, it extends to every circumstance, and half its beauty we have not discovered, having never been in those situations which have called forth its influence. No accidents can deface this rule: frequently it has been threatened with danger, when Josiah lived there was but one copy of the Law, during the time of Dioclesian there was a charge given to burn the Bible, but it must continue till the important ends designed by its promulgation are realized.

The defence of its Doctrines ought to be a defence worthy of the Subject in which you are engaged. Do not contend for it with unhallowed weapons. *The Weapons of our Warfare are not carnal but mighty thro' God to the pulling down of the strong holds of Sin and Satan.* It was worthy the system which the eastern Monarch propagated, that it should be defended by fire and sword, but no such means are authorised in our contending for the Truth. Conviction is the instrument that does all the execution. Insinuation and deception are unworthy of the subject in which you are engaged. Never seek to gain ground by a concealment of part of the truth; never think it will prove too obnoxious for the purposes for which it is designed. Do you contend for Truth, and Truth will contend for you. Defend it by an impartial avowal of its various parts, and let each part of religious Truth be precious in your estimation. Let earnestness and energy accompany your defence of it, and shew that you deem it a matter of the greatest importance. The best manner of contending for it, and which will admit of general adoption, is

by illustrating its practical tendency, Men can read lives when they will not read books. This will be an argument so important and conclusive in its favor, that even its enemies will not be able to gainsay or resist.

II. Let us now select some of the principal motives to enforce that holy zeal which the sacred Truths of the Gospel demand.

A scriptural defence of the Truth will *promote* in a great degree our *spiritual enjoyment.* The assertion which many have made that the system we adopt is of little importance, provided the conduct be consistent, is both unscriptural and irrational: for this is supposing an impossibility. *Make the tree good and the fruit will be good.* Let proper principles actuate, and their operations will become evident. The very first impressions that are made upon the mind by divine Grace, are made upon our sentiments, for if these be right, a foundation is laid for improvement in every part of a man's future Conduct. The Divine Life in the Soul is maintained in proportion as the steadfast adherence to the Truth is supported; and on the other hand, Indifference to the doctrines of the Gospel, generally precedes a decay of vital Godliness, for when a man's head gets giddy his fall may soon be expected.

Consider the *Value* of those Doctrines for which you are called to contend. The cause of Religion, which is the cause of God, originated in his divine mind; is carried on by his own power, and forms the most illustrious display of his Glory. It is that Faith which has proved the unfading source of all your comforts since a Saviour has been endeared to your heart. Martyrs have spilt their blood, and saints in every age have been persecuted for their adherence to it. But it has enabled the Christian to say, *Perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed.* Notwithstanding the importance that is attached to them, how few are there in our Churches who can give an explanation, much less offer a defence of the Truths of the Gospel; and when assailed by its enemies, they have been unable to dispute their assertions for want of Information. You are mistaken, Christians, when you say it only behoves those who take the lead in the Churches, to understand the principles upon which their belief is founded. It behoves you individually to search the Scriptures with a view to form a correct estimate of sacred Truth, so that you may be able to *give to every one that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear, and having* commended yourself to God, to *commend yourself to every man's conscience as in the sight of God.*

Consider the prevalence of error. This led the Apostle so earnestly to exhort Christians to contend for the Faith: *for there are Men creeping in unawares, turning the grace of God into licentiousness, denying the Lord that bought them, and bringing upon themselves swift destruction.* There is nothing in error either innocent

or harmless; and in proportion as it abounds, the friends of Truth should exert themselves, and appear *decided* in the cause they defend; by this means error will be stript of its specious disguises, and divested of the pleas by which it is unjustly supported.

Consider the sacred trust which is committed to your care: for such is the Truth. It is committed to your charge: you have received it from your ancestors, and have to transmit it to posterity. How jealous then ought you to be of keeping it inviolably pure. Especially should this be a matter of the greatest importance with Ministers, in their Ministration of the word of life—with Parents, who are to bring up their Children and Servants in the admonition of the Lord. The Truth is peculiarly interesting to us all, for future ages will depend upon the present reception we give to the Truth, and the zeal we discover in its defence and establishment. *Contend therefore earnestly for the faith once delivered to the Saints, that ye may have confidence in the last day, that ye have not run in vain, nor laboured in vain.*

Plymouth. *W, R.*

A Warning to Professors.

It has been observed by a very honoured servant of Christ, that London Christians are generally deficient in the private duties of religion. However the remark may extend among our Country Brethren, I am convinced it is eminently applicable to those of the great city. They have such an abundance of public ordinances and opportunities for religious association, that they are too apt to rest here, and forego the advantages of retirement and self-examination. I have seen so many sad effects resulting from this evil, that I cannot forbear to warn my fellow Christians against it.

The great design of God in the dispensation of the gospel, is to purify to himself *a peculiar people*, that they may shew forth his praise. Hence they are called to come out from an ungodly world, to be separate from the lovers of sinful pleasure, and to seek their happiness in the pursuit of nobler objects. Instead of draining to the dregs the cup of sensual gratification, they draw living waters out of the wells of salvation, and drink from the river of divine favour. While others are anxiously enquiring after worldly good, they seek in the stillness of holy meditation, as well as in public ordinances, to enjoy fellowship with Him whose loving-kindness is better than life.

It is in vain that men talk about the pleasures of religion while they are indifferent to communion with God in private. This is the *Soul* that animates all our duties. When the heart is cold in the closet, a degree of spiritual langour pervades every faculty, and you

will perceive a man under the influence of this malady, like one afflicted with a hectic fever; his debilitated spirits can only be raised by the help of cordials and stimulants, and a flushed imagination is succeeded by increased imbecility. I am persuaded, that much evil arises for want of close consideration in such a case. Now should be the hour of enquiry—*Is there not a cause?* This is the time for humiliation and fervent prayer. *I have sinned, Lord, restore thy servant.* But these are painful remedies, and we want *comfort!* It is now that Society puts on its most destructive allurements, and the dear friend of our bosom wears the habiliments of treachery. The voice of conscience has been slighted, and she assumes a frowning aspect; God has been awfully trifled with, and he withholds the light of his countenance. Friends smile and court our company as much as ever, we enter the social circle, *live* only there, and it is to be feared learn to take a solemn sound upon a thoughtless tongue. Dismal as this picture is, sad experience proves it is not too deeply shaded. How many beautiful blossoms have been thus blasted—how many who did run well have thus been hindered, I am unwilling even to conjecture: the history of our Churches affords ample and melancholy evidence of the fact. While a highly favoured few have escaped with a broken bone, which has made them to go halting all their days, the far greater number have settled on the lees of their profession, and present to our view the skeleton of a Christian.

The Lord has set bounds to the sea which it cannot pass, but he knows little of his own heart who expects to curb at pleasure a fond attachment to the seductive charms of society. Could it have been said to these "Thus far," the evil were not wholly irremediable; the Christian monitor might have warned, or the voice of thunder arouzed from such a heartless lethargic condition. But alas! these fearful premises naturally portend a most awful conclusion. An indifference to close walking with God, followed by a love of *religious* visiting, too soon paves the way for an intercourse with the world, and frequently terminates in a dereliction of every principle that is exclusively Christian. I greatly fear that the commonness of the case has tended to lessen the concern it ought to excite in our minds. Can it indeed surprize us when we see the eagerness with which our youth run into mixed parties, where music and dancing are the order of the evening, and cards only declined because their good parents have taken some pains to keep them in ignorance of the game? Can it, I say, be matter of wonder that so many doubtful and doubting characters disfigure our religious communities, when we hear conformity to the world palliated and defended by those who profess to be pilgrims and sojourners upon earth? What an interesting sight is that of a lovely woman who has publickly avowed her attachment to the Lord Jesus, led up the sprightly dance by the devotee to gaiety and fashion! Let us for a moment suppose

some serious youth, attracted by her pleasing manners, regular attendance at prayer meetings, sensible and perhaps edifying conversation, is induced to attend her to such company. What will be his sensations, after having looked to her as the future partner of his joys, the soother of his cares, an *help-mate* in every relation and situation of life, and fondly hoped she would have refined and exalted his Christian Character—when he sees her listen with undisguised pleasure to the fulsome insipid rhapsodies of the gay and thoughtless sons of frivolity?

Ye Mothers in Israel, what are ye not chargeable with, thus to expose the hope of the rising generation to the allurements of a world, with the dangers of which you cannot be unacquainted. Will you lead them to sport on the edge of the precipice, down which you exhort them to beware of falling? And you, ye virgin daughters of Zion, if indeed ye seek Jesus who was crucified, why seek ye the living among the dead? If he has been found of you, was the Ball-room, the Tea-party, or the Oratorio the place where you met with him and solaced yourselves with his love? Did he reveal himself to you at the Card-table, or tune your hearts to praise him in the *harmless* songs of levity and mirth. Be admonished, my fellow believers, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep. What! shall the lovers of mid-night assemblies, of dancing and revelry find advocates for their folly in the *self-denying* followers of him whom their fathers slew and hanged on a tree?—in the Elders of Israel, the Officers of Christian Churches? Oh! tell it not in Gath lest the Philistines triumph! Suffer, my Christian Brethren, the word of exhortation. I will not insult your understanding by saying, *If Baal be God, then follow him*,—but this question I would ask you, and my own heart feels its importance,—If we seek our pleasure in the same way with the men of this world, what evidence have we that we shall not divide our portion with them at last?

London. *O. B.*

Answer to a Query.

Mr. Editor,

Tapeinos's Query awakens in me the sentiments of regret, which I have often felt, that none or *very little* pains are taken in dissenting congregations *in general* to instil into their Members proper principles of dissent, together with instruction relative to the nature, formation, and discipline of a Christian Church. The late Mr. Robinson, of Cambridge, proposed a plan which, if generally adopted, would, I think, be of great utility, by making those who are now Dissenters only from profession and connection, such

from *Principle.* He proposed our having a course of Lectures on that subject, according to a plan he has drawn up for that purpose. Where this plan is not adopted, I think the protestant dissenter's catechism might be used and distributed at a small expense to *great advantage.* I have also often thought that if some judicious treatise on the subject of Church government (wherein the scriptures on that point are drawn to a focus) were presented to every person who unites with us, it would be of vast benefit; as from their being well instructed they *would know how they ought to behave themselves in the House of God, which is the Church of the Living God.* There was a small, yet comprehensive treatise of this kind published about the beginning of the last century by Mr. John Williams, a Minister of our connection, entitled the Divine Institution, Order, and Government of a visible church of Christ, &c. If a new edition of this were printed, and either given or sold cheap, so that all might be furnished with a copy, it might promote love and harmony, and consequently prevent confusion and many evil works.

But with respect to the Query which gave rise to these remarks, I will give *his* answer as a specimen of the work. He speaks thus, page 55. "*Quest.* 6. Whether the Sisters be a voting part of the Church or not? I answer in the affirmative, they are. For

1. The Sisters are an essential *part of the Church* as well as the Brethren; the one hundred and twenty disciples to which the three thousand were added, *Acts* ii, 41. were *the Church*, the same Church to which the Lord daily added, *verse* 47. and *this Church* consisted of *Sisters* as well as *Brethren. Acts.* i, 14.

2. They are equally concerned, as to the welfare of their Souls, with the Brethren, in the choice of Elders, and many other Church acts that things may be so managed as that they may be free from relative guilt.

3. The rule *Matt.* xviii. If thy *brother* trespass against thee, tell him his fault between thee and him alone, &c. is not expressly restricted to the *Brethren*; but is to be taken indefinitely, of *Members*, whether Brothers or Sisters; and if so, the Sister who is offended, must proceed till she bring it to the Church.

4. The Sisters are not to be put out, or withdrawn from, when a case is brought to the Church: if they should, it would be brought but to *a part* of the Church and not to the whole.

5. The Apostle did not exclude the Sisters when he wrote to the Church of Corinth to cast out the incestuous person. 1 *Cor.* v, 4.

6. We do not find the Sisters were excluded when the Churches ordained them Elders, *Acts* xiv, 23. *They ordained them Elders by election in all the Churches,* no mention is made that the Sisters were denied their vote. Nor have we any reason to conclude, when the acts of the Church are mentioned (of which Church or Churches the Sisters cannot be denied to be an *essential part*) that the Church is but the Brethren, not the Sisters.

Objection. The Apostle forbids Women to speak in the Church 1 *Cor.* xiv, 34. *Let your Women keep silence in the Church, for it is not permitted unto them to speak.* If they may not speak, they may not vote.

I answer, this prohibition is *not* to be extended to *all* cases; and if so, then it seems to be restricted to the subject that was then in hand, which will come under two heads. First, they were not permitted to speak in a way of *prophecy*, but the Brethren might. *They might all prophesy one by one.* Secondly, they must not enquire (in the Church) into what was delivered in a way of prophecy; *if they would learn any thing, they must ask their Husbands at home.* But the Brethren might enquire into it. That this prohibition is *not* to be extended to *all* cases is evident; for, first, a Sister having discharged her Duty in private, if it take not, she must *tell* it unto the Church, and lay open the circumstances of the matter, and be a witness in the case; this *cannot* be done unless she be allowed to *speak in the Church.* Secondly, a Sister may be brought under dealing by the Church, and must she not *speak* in her own defence? Must she be silent whether she be accused right or wrong, and so fall under the censure of the Church, not being permitted to speak for herself? Is there any law in the Church of Christ that judgeth a member before a hearing? It is possible a Sister may be accused of Heresy for differing from others in principles, though the points held by her may be sound doctrine? and must she not be suffered to plead her own cause, which, it may be, is the cause of Christ? Must the truth suffer, and the Sister suffer, rather than she be permitted to speak in the Church? This I think would be accounted a hard measure by judicious men, and if so, then those judicious men that so accounted it, *must restrict* the prohibition to some *particular* case; and if so, what more likely to be the case or cases, than those that were handled when the prohibition was given out?"

The above quotation is I think, a full answer to the *whole* of the Query, and proves that *all* Church Members have an *equal* right to vote in the transaction of *all* their concerns, without any regard to sex. I earnestly wish our Querist would procure the above work, as I am fully persuaded the *whole* of it would be highly gratifying and instructive.

J. M.

Obituary.

Rev. T. FEREBEE.

The stroke of death is under every circumstance an event of the most serious nature. It is a solemn intimation from the invisible world, that every one must shortly follow his relative, his friend, or his ac-

quaintance to appear before God, and to reside in the world of Spirits. In Mr. Ferebee's departure from mortality there were two circumstances which added to its solemnity. He was a Minister of the gospel, an overseer of a flock purchased by the blood of Jesus: and the stroke was sudden, without any previous illness.

Mr. F. was born at Uley, in Gloucestershire, in 1733, and was blessed with the instructions and example of a very pious mother, who for some time attended the ministry of Mr. Birt, at Kingstanley. He afterwards attended the Meeting at Horsley, and by the gospel of Jesus Christ was made wise unto salvation. It does not appear that he could ever state the precise time of his conversion: divine grace operated on his mind in a gradual, effectual manner, and was rendered evident to those who knew him by his deportment. He was baptized at Horsley, before Mr. Francis came among them, and sometime after entered the Academy at Bristol, then under the care of Mr. Foskett and Mr. Hugh Evans. His amiable and pious demeanour while there procured him the affectionate esteem of the latter, whose attachment to him was as permanent as his life. By his death Mr. F. lost a valuable friend who had constantly manifested the kindest solicitude for his welfare.

Some time after he had compleated his studies preparatory to the ministry, he accepted an invitation from the Baptist Church at Sodbury, and was ordained there on the 10th of December, 1766. The Baptist Interest at that time was very low in every respect. But Mr. F. made it manifest that he sought not theirs but them. His own hands ministered to his necessities: he kept a school, and several who are now ornaments to their christian profession, received their first religious impressions in his house and under his prayers.

The inhabitants of the town and its neighbourhood, indeed all who knew him, highly respected him, the ungodly and profane could not but speak well of him. His whole conduct dared even the tongue of slander to calumniate his character. Humility, love, peace, meekness, and all the softer graces of religion especially shone in him. Flaming zeal, irresistible energy, and inflexible determination, were not the distinguishing traits of his character. He was the modest, humble Christian, and the affectionate Minister of Jesus Christ. Success equal to his wishes did not attend his ministry, yet upon a review of his work, he could perceive that his labour had not been in vain in the Lord.

His own family witnessed the poignant exercises of his mind, when the ways of zion were forsaken, or any of his flock walked disorderly. In the last year of his life, the Western Baptist Association was held at Sodbury, to which he for some time looked forward with great desire, nor was he disappointed, for it was to him, emphatically, *a time of refreshing from the presence of the Most High.*

Some time before his death, he expressed, with submission, a wish to depart suddenly, remarking that he felt no tie to this world, but his wife and daughter. For about a month before the fulfilment of his desire, they remarked that every Night he engaged in family worship, he constantly suggested the probability of one of the family being called into eternity before morning; altho' for some months he had himself enjoyed a better state of health than usual.

On the Lord's day preceding his death (August 14, 1808) he heard Mr. Williams, of London, with much enjoyment, and in the afternoon preached for the last time from *Ezek.* xxxvii, 3. and gave out the 102d hymn of Dr. Watts's second Book, "No I'll repine at Death no more," &c. which evidently expressed his feelings. He greatly enjoyed the evening service, and on the Thursday evening walked 4 miles to attend a lecture, in which he found much satisfaction. At the prayer-meeting on Friday evening he was very comfortable, came home quite cheerful, and was unusually elevated in family prayer. He retired to rest apparently in good health: but about midnight Mrs. F. heard him groan, and enquiring the cause, he replied, putting his hand upon his breast, that there he felt pain, but refused her offer to rise to get something for his relief. After a short interval, he uttered another groan, when, finding his hand lifeless, Mrs. F. arose and called her daughter: he groaned softly once or twice more, and expired before his daughter reached the room. Thus sudden was his transition from earth to heaven! Our continuance here how uncertain! Eternity how near!

On the following Wednesday he was interred in the Baptist's burying-ground at Sodbury; Dr. Ryland delivered an oration at the grave—and the following Lord's day improved the event by an impressive discourse from *Phil.* i, 23. *For I am in a strait between two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ, which is far better.*

MASTER J. HARVEY.

Joseph Harvey was about 13 years of age, the son of Mr. Harvey, a respectable member of a Baptist church in Liverpool. At an early period of life, he was deprived of a worthy mother, and was thereby cast on the augmented solicitude of a tender father. By him, he was much loved, not unwarrantably indulged. Favoured with a liberal education, and ruled by the steady, tho' affectionate arm of a christian parent, he made rapid advances in useful and polite literature, and promised to enter into active life with every amiable qualification. His teacher was partial to the talents, his friends to the prudence, the steadiness, the application, which he displayed.

Yet, tho' accustomed from his infancy to hear the gospel preached, and tho' brought up in the nurture of the Lord, tho' thus constantly favoured with every private and public means of divine instruction, he discovered, previous to his last illness, no evidences of a renewed nature. We must not confound sedateness with piety, nor amiable tempers with the love and meekness and humility produced by the holy Spirit. The *one* thing needful was wanting.

A few weeks ago, God was pleased to visit him with a slight indisposition. He was threatened with symptoms of a rheumatic fever, or with an inflamation in the chest. No real danger was apprehended. It was generally thought, that in a short time his health would be fully restored. God however, whose thoughts and ways are higher than ours, soon revealed his purposes relative to his residence here. On wednesday morning, the 11th of Dec. fatal symptoms appeared. The general circulation grew languid, and breathing became exceedingly painful. The harbingers of death seized on his frame, and after a hard struggle of some

hours, the king of terror took his unerring aim. At 3 o'clock in the afternoon he departed from the body, and repaired to Abraham's bosom. The writer of this account was with him the greater part of the momentous time, and witnessed a scene at once most distressing and most consoling. That God, who is rich in mercy, and wonderful in working, had chosen to make the day of his death better than the day of his birth.

At the commencement of the attack, he was heard by his father, to cry out in prayer, "Lord Jesus receive my spirit." The earnestness, fervour, and serenity with which this petition was offered up, surprized and delighted his afflicted parent. In the intervals of his succeeding agony, he was addressed by several persons on his eternal concerns, and spoke in such a manner as overwhelmed us all with grief and joy.

"I am a great sinner; I have been a great sinner; but Jesus is the friend of sinners, and Jesus is my friend too." Joseph, said his father, what think you of Jesus? "He is my hope and my trust, my peace and my all." While dwelling on his past sins, and mourning over them, his father reminded him, that Christ had loved sinners and given himself for them. "Yes, he loved me, and I love him too!—How I long to be gone! I shall not be long. I am going to see Jesus. What a wicked world; oh how I long to be gone! I shall soon be with angels and with happy spirits!"

"Joseph," he was asked, "are you afraid to die? No Sir, I'm not afraid to die. I have no desire to get better—I would not on any account recover—What an unworthy sinner I am, and yet Jesus died for me! What love that he should die for me!" Occasionally, he exclaimed with all the triumph of assured hope, "I shall soon sing the song of Moses and the Lamb." Repeatedly he melted the heart of his parent by addressing him thus: Father, I am going. Don't fret. You grieve me, father. I know that you'll repine when I am gone. Oh don't repine. I am going to my heavenly Father, to a better Father. I shall see there my heavenly Father, and my own father too. Don't grieve, we shall meet again.

Except when agonized with pain, he was calm and collected. He knew the friends that surrounded his bed, and addressed them in the most affectionate terms. He was burdened with any attention, and expressed a lively gratitude for every kindness. The most melting part of the scene, was, when with expressive looks and bended neck, he threw his arms round the neck of his weeping father, and repeatedly took farewell of him in this world. He expired without a sigh, a groan, or a struggle. A few minutes before his departure, he again repeated with emphasis these favourite words "I am a great Sinner, but Jesus is a great Saviour."

Permit me to express with all brevity the language of this event.

1. Soverign Grace. Our God has mercy on whom he will have mercy. Can we assign a better reason why God fixed his love on this young sinner, than the Apostolic reason, *that he might show the exceeding riches of his Grace in his kindness towards him thro' Christ Jesus.*

2. Divine Origin of the Gospel. Young persons, in general, are not marked with guile and hypocrisy. They cannot be taught, easily, to express sentiments which they do not entertain. In divine matters particularly, they are not qua-

lified to impose on their fellow creatures. Above all, on a death bed, in agonies of pain, and in prospect of eternity, they will not, they cannot express a hope, a joy, a love, a resignation, foreign to their minds. Such a conversion, such a death as Joseph Harvey's is a bright evidence that Jesus is living, that the Spirit is given to sinners, and that the gospel is not a cunningly devised fable, but God's power to salvation. *Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings, thou hast ordained strength, because of thy enemies.*

3. Mysteriousness of God's purposes and ways. In such a Death, we see the commencement and termination of the christian race in one point. The pilgrim, with his first step enters the Jordan of Death, and with another reaches the heavenly shore. The sinner is called, with his dying breath to witness the love and grace and worth of that Saviour who has just snatched him from the brink of destruction. Here, the spiritual warrior is furnished with celestial panoply, by the great Captain of Salvation, to encounter, conquer, and more than conquer, *first* of all, the *last* enemy.

Liverpool. *J. L.*

J. S. WHITCHURCH.

John Simpson Whitchurch, Son of Samuel Whitchurch of the City of Bath, died on the 30th November last, having nearly compleated his 18th year—He was naturally of an impetuous and enterprizing disposition. After he had attained the age of 8 years, he had frequent convictions, and often besought the Lord to pardon him when he had committed an act that he deemed to be sinful. When eleven years of age, he was placed under the care of the Rev. Mr. Hinton, Pastor of the Baptist Church at Oxford, whose spiritual instructions were made very beneficial to him, and produced on his mind a deep and abiding sense of the evil of sin, which he has since acknowledged to his Parents, and which had, no doubt, thro' the blessing of God, a considerable influence on his future life, so that he was kept from those follies and vices which are the besetting sins of youth. He was a lad of great firmness of mind; prompt and indefatigable, in the acquirement of knowledge, and did not leave his worthy and respectable Tutor without considerable commendation.

When only 16 years of age his attachment to the Truth as it is in Jesus was abundantly testified, and he would most ably and strenuously advocate its cause, and repel the assaults of its enemies. At this period of his life it pleased the Lord in his providence most grievously to afflict him with the measles; he then began to be in earnest for the salvation of his soul, and although he never afterwards recovered his former health and strength, yet when he grew better, he became less in earnest for the things which made for his everlasting peace, and has frequently lamented it, and expressed his fears that the affliction was not sanctified to his soul. He continued in a declining state ever afterwards; although change of residence, Journies by land and by water, and various other means were resorted to for the benefit of his health, the sovereign disposer of all events was pleased to frustrate every attempt to check the power of that inveterate disorder which by slow degrees, but

with steady pace, made inroads on his constitution, and finally compleated the work of death. He was brought, however, to acquiesce with the will of his heavenly Father respecting the progress of that fatal disease which terminated his earthly existence, and would often say—"I believe this affliction is sent in love to my soul, and I hope I shall at all times view it so."

It was within 3 months of his death, but more particularly during the last fortnight, that the Lord was pleased by his Spirit to convince him more deeply of sin; he was led to feel the corruption of his heart, and to lament his ignorance and darkness; and what lay most heavy on his mind, was his neglect of God, and his ingratitude to that dear Saviour who had done and suffered so much to redeem lost sinners. He said to a friend, "I do not love the Saviour for that he will save me from hell only, but I love him for his great love towards lost sinners. He found great delight in meditating on the 53rd chap. of Isaiah, and the 17th ch. of John's Gospel. He was much attached to the simple and plaintive Muse of Susannah Harrison, and much delighted with some of the Olney Hymns, particularly with that which begins with,

My Soul is beset with grief and dismay,
I owe a vast debt and nothing can pay.

he would frequently exclaim in the concluding language of another,

"Tho' painful at present,
'Twill cease before long;
And then, Oh! how pleasant
The Conqueror's Song."

He dwelt much on the union subsisting between Christ and his people, which he was convinced was indissoluble. His desire to be with the Saviour, to praise him in greater perfection was intense, and for that purpose he would frequently say "I long to be gone," and he would sometimes ask his medical friend who attended him, and to whom he had been apprenticed a short time before his Illness, "How long do you think I have to stay in this lingering state? His friend would reply, "it is uncertain, but the Lord will give you patience to bear your afflictions, and strength equal to the day, and this was evidently granted him.

His sufferings were very great, and his resignation to the will of God under them was manifested to be the spirit's work. Frequently when conversing with his dear Parents about the love of Christ to sinners, and the riches of that grace which he had been made the partaker of, he would break out in great fervency, and say, O my dear Saviour, I long to love thee more, and to be with thee to praise thee, thou hast not, thou wilt not break a bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax. I am that poor miserable sinner; O have mercy on me! The Rev. Mr. Jay one time when conversing freely with him on the plan of Salvation and the love of Christ to his people, asked him what he would wish him to pray for, to which he replied—Sir you know; what can a poor sinner desire but an interest in Christ? At another visit, Mr. Jay asked him what were his views of heaven, and what he deeired to go there for, He said, "To praise the Lamb." At another time, in conversation with his Mother, he said "I long to be with the Saviour, to unite with the four and twenty elders, saints, and angels in singing the song of Moses and the Lamb." On it being said to him, If we had used other means perhaps you might have recovered, he instantly replied, "If a sparrow cannot fall to the ground without our

heavenly Father's permission, and if the very hairs of our head are all numbered, surely these things which are of much greater importance are all appointed by him."

The day before his death a particular friend said to him "You will be with Jesus soon:" to which he replied, "Yes, and I shall see your departed Wife, and I trust shall meet yon and all your family around the throne. I know that my Redeemer liveth." The same day he said to his sorrowing Parents, "I believe in God the Father, and in his Son Jesus Christ, and that whosoever cometh to him, he will in no wise cast out." In the after part of the same day he said to one of his Brothers, "My dear Father and Mother can do nothing for me now, but I have a precious Saviour; do not you neglect seeking the Saviour, for you will stand in need of him in health, but much more in death. Be sure to read your Bible, if I had read it more instead of the trash which I have read, I should now have many more precious promises for the support of my poor Soul." To his elder Sister he said, "I am younger than you are, but permit me to tell you that my time is short, and perhaps yours will not be long: I would exhort you to seek that blessed Saviour who has been so good to me."

His Father and Mother were both with him when he died; indeed one or the other of them had constantly watched with him every night for a week before, but they now supposed his end to be at hand, although they did not think it to be so near as it really was. About 3 o'clock in the Morning his Father said to him as well as his feelings allowed him to articulate the words—"You are now going, my dear John, to leave us your earthly parents, and will soon be with your heavenly Father in those mansions which your blessed Saviour has prepared for you." He said, "I hope so Father," and in a few minutes after his hopes were realized. But so gently did he breathe his Soul away, that his Father, although close by him, would not have suspected it, had he not perceived that his labouring breast had ceased to heave.

His lifeless remains were deposited the Sunday after in that silent vault which contained the ashes of four children of the same family, and in the Evening the melancholy event was improved by the Rev. Mr. Jay in an appropriate and solemn address to youth from *Eccles.* xi, 10. *For Childhood and Youth are vanity.* His sorrowing Parents, although they wish to bow with meek submission to the will of their heavenly Father under this most afflictive providence, and to adore and magnify his rich grace and mercy that softened down the temper of their beloved child, and enabled him to bear his sufferings with so much patience and pious resignation, yet they cannot cease to feel their loss, and to weep over the memory of such a Son.

Yet would they fain to heaven uplift their eyes;
There brighter scenes, and lov'lier prospects rise;
There earth's frail flow'rets shall anon assume
Immortal beauty, and unfading bloom.
Thro' happier climes there kindred Spirits rove,
Lasting their intercourse, and pure their love;
No parting pang is felt, no sickness there,
Nor hopeless grief, nor misery, nor despair.
There friendship burns its unabating fire;
Love's holy flame shall never there expire!

Bath, 12th. Jan. 1809. *S. W.*

The Subject of the following lines was the daughter of respectable religious Parents, from whose paternal care she had been unhappily seduced. She afterwards sought an Asylum in the Bath Penitentiary, where she had been domesticated about 16 months, and gave pleasing evidence of a work of grace upon her heart. She died in the exercise of penitence and hope.

Restor'd ELIZA! Error's wand'ring Child,
Most happy once, when Innocency smil'd,
Ere rebel passions led her heart astray,
And turn'd her feet from Virtue's narrow way;
Ere she had fallen, and heedless of fair fame,
Brought foul dishonour on her Father's name—
Long strove her sire, but strove alas! in vain,
To bring her back to duty's path again;
And oft he bade the sinful wanderer come,
Beneath his shelt'ring roof to find a home;
For his lost Child his heart with anguish burn'd;
He waited long—No prodigal return'd.
O grief too great for life's declining years;
Unlook'd for Sorrow in this vale of tears!
Yet she return'd, though not to him she came,
To wail past follies, and confess her shame;
These eyes beheld her seek the open door,
And free admittance tremblingly implore;
These eyes beheld her deep contrition there,
In the bless'd house for penitence and prayer;
Her time to God where she resolved to give,
To seek her Saviour, and repent, and live;
There from the World's vain pleasures to retire,
And beg forgiveness of her injur'd sire.
Sorrowing she came, she gave to God her heart,
And he was pleas'd his mercy to impart;
She pray'd to God, her follies he forgave,
And bless'd her soul with hopes beyond the grave.
Dead to the World, she bade its charms adieu,
And left its cares, with happiness in view;
Into her Saviour's hands resign'd her breath,
And pass'd with joy the gloomy gate of death!
Hark! Angel voices raise the gladsome sound,
"This child that once was lost—behold is found!"

Bath. *S. W.*

ACCOUNT OF RELIGIOUS PUBLICATIONS.

A Companion to the Holy Bible; the Subject SACRED GEOGRAPHY; being a geographical and historical account of places mentioned in the holy Scripture—augmented by geographical excursions, in which the Geography of Scripture is confirmed by evidence intirely new in its application, &c. By the Editor of Calmet's Dictionary of the Holy Bible: with maps and plates. 4to, in six parts, *5s each.* Taylor, *London.* 1808.

This volume is the last of a series which have been several years in publication, the object of which is to illustrate Scripture by means of the testimony of travellers who have visited Palestine. The first division was an attempt to elucidate the manners, costume, domestic habits, &c. of the east, and appeared in short discussions called *Fragments*, annexed to Calmet's Dictionary. The second division treated chiefly on the Natural History of Scripture; the third and last is the Sacred Geography above mentioned.

There are 44 plates attached to this volume: the maps are ingeniously contrived, and peculiarly interesting. The whole is a very valuable accession to the stores of biblical learning; especially in the present troubled state of the Nations, which has prevented the exertions of a Society formed to obtain accurate information respecting the antiquities and present condition of the Holy Land.

A Discourse on Trouble of Mind, and the Disease of Melancholy; with a Preface, containing several Advices to the Relations and Friends of Melancholy People. By Timothy Rogers, M. A. *3rd edit. To which is prefixed the Life of the Author. bds. 5s*

We agree with the Editor of this publication, that "the Circumstances in which the pious Author was placed previous to his writing it, rendered him a very fit person to write upon such a subject. He had nothing to do but to detail his own experience, and in so doing he has recorded the experience of many thousands of pious persons, who in all periods of the church have been afflicted, more or less, with a dejection of spirits, which has very properly been termed "Religious Melancholy." In this respect it is a very excellent performance, and will doubtless continue to administer considerable relief to such persons, as in similar circumstances, obtain a sight of it. And we especially recommend the "Advices" contained in the Preface to the particular attention of all those who are about persons labouring under this affliction.

But it has been our lot to be acquainted with many cases of Melancholy, where, altho' the terror and distress expressed by the unhappy subjects, seemed to have more or less relation to religion, yet there was a radical difference in the *nature* of their feelings: and on their recovery they no longer regarded Religion as a matter of any importance. Some of these are yet living, and notwithstanding all their amazing terrors, confession of guilt, and prayers, tears, and vows, they love and live in sin

as formerly, to the great astonishment of their religious acquaintance, who had confounded their cases with others of a very different class.

Mr. Rogers's work contains almost every thing we could wish to put into the hands of *religious* people under depression of spirits. But we think it highly desirable that a line of distinction should be clearly drawn between *these* and various other classes of melancholy people. Whoever would do this with perspicuous precision, drawn from personal observation, would perform an acceptable service to Ministers in particular, and to the religious public at large.

—o∞o—

Believer's Baptism from heaven, and of divine institution; Infant Baptism from earth, and of human invention: proved from the commission of Christ, the great lawgiver of the Christian Church. By Hercules Collins, *a servant of the servants of Christ.* First published in the year 1691. *Revised and republished by* John Bailey, S. J. C. Pastor of the Baptist Church, Great Alie Street, Goodman's Fields, and Author of Comfort for the feeble minded, &c. 8vo. pp. 75. Button, 2*s.*

The Editor says, "If the question of believer's baptism was freely and dispassionately entered into, surely the arguments would be found much in favour of baptism by immersion, both from the word of God, and the history of the Church.

"To enable sincere enquirers to understand the subject, as a gospel ordinance, I have undertaken to reprint this excellent book, which will be found to answer all the cavilling arguments of those who are wise above that which is written.—To furnish [the weak of the flock] with arguments, such as, I think, cannot be overcome; and to enable them to put to silence the ignorance of foolish men, this little treatise is put into their hands; and it contains the doctrine of baptism, it proves that baptism is immersion; it most clearly sets forth that believers *only* are the proper subjects of it.

"The varied objections are answered in a scriptural, conclusive, and masterly manner. The parallel is run between Believer's Baptism and Infant Sprinkling, in so plain and easy a manner, that none can plead ignorance, for they will now be left without excuse."

This is a very proper account of Hercules Collins's Book, which is well calculated to effect the Editor's design.

—o∞o—

Social Religion exemplified, in an Account of the first settlement of Christianity in the city of Caerludd, in several Dialogues. Written originally by the Rev. Matthias Maurice. *The fifth edition. Revised, corrected and abridged, with occasional Notes, a Copious Index, and a Preface containing some account of the Author,* by Edward Williams, D. D. Burditt, 5*s.* bds.

Social Religion, in the most extensive sense of the terms, is Religion applied to the circumstances of a people collected by the ministry of the Gospel, and adopting its Principles for the regulation of their conduct towards each other. Rules adapted to such Societies, with exemplars of their proceedings, are found scattered in various portions of the historical and preceptive parts of the New Testament. The worthy Author of this work, intended to exhibit the

bearings of Christian Principles, directed by New Testament precepts, upon a variety of such cases of sin and error, penitence and obduracy, as may be expected to occur in the formation and establishment of religious communities; and thus to exemplify in a connected view, the conduct proper to be maintained by Societies professing obedience to Christ. The work is rendered interesting by assuming an historical form. The characters are drawn with a masterly hand. Some of them command our reverence, our esteem, our affection. It would be a happy circumstance for the Religious world, if Christian Societies of the present day would act under the Spirit displayed by the principal persons whose history is briefly narrated in these dialogues. They are represented as not only taking the letter of the scripture for their rule, but they exhibit the lovely temper it inculcates in their conduct.

There is, however, one circumstance of which we feel it our duty to apprize our readers. The author considers the Infants of believing Parents as Members of the Church to which the Parents belong! A relation of proceedings adapted to such a state of things, is given in the eighth dialogue; but here the Author evidently talks *without book*, and introduces us to a course of discipline, of which we can find no traces in the sacred volume. With this exception, we recommend the work to our readers, believing that all would be gratified, and most of them benefited by its perusal.

The proper names which designate the several Characters, being in the British tongue, will render the work additionally acceptable to our Welsh brethren.

Scripture Dialogues; or Dialogues between a Pilgrim and Adam, Noah, and Simeon Cleophas; containing the History of the Bible, and of the Jews, to their Dispersion at the Destruction of Jerusalem: with which are connected some of the most remarkable events in Prophane History, extracted from the best and most ancient Authors. Originally translated from the Dutch. A new edition, carefully revised and corrected 8*vo. pp.* 460. *price* 8*s bds.* Burditt, Hatchard, Williams and Smith. 1808.

The plan of this work is to exhibit a body of sacred history to the end of the first century of the Christian era. For this purpose, Adam, Noah, and Cleophas, are each made to furnish his portion of information. The history of the Church of God is the great subject of the dialogues; but they are enriched with incidental notices of human affairs in the principal nations of the heathen world.

The anonymous Author displays a sound judgment, accompanied with a considerable stock of general knowledge, and a taste for simple elegance, happily (tho' now so rarely) combined with much devotional feeling, and a steady faith in the divine oracles.

Without any parade of learning, the simple tale of Adam or Noah communicates to us the result of much reading and study; for where the Sacred Scriptutes are silent, the author has had recourse to Josephus and other historians, to form a complete history of the Church. The embellishments furnished by a fertile imagination, are disposed in such a method as to convey a large portion of instruction as well as entertainment.

The present editor very properly

remarks that "the style is simple and pathetic, and partakes of a degree of antiquity suited to the venerable characters who conduct the narrative in each dialogue." And he adds "In the corrections which have been made, attention has not only been paid to the language, so as to render it acceptable, but also to the detail of circumstances and events; in which accuracy has been invariably aimed at, and that, upon the whole, in as great a degree as a nice and diligent search into history could give it, or the brevity required in a work of this kind would admit of: and these particulars, it is trusted, will shew themselves to have been generally accomplished."

For the information of some of our readers, we add, that the Simeon Cleophas here mentioned "was son to the Cleophas mentioned in the New Testament, (who was the brother of Joseph, the husband of Mary) and it is also thought probable that he was one of the Seventy disciples. On the martyrdom of his brother, St. James the less, he was chosen Bishop of Jerusalem in his stead; and after governing that church with fidelity and diligence for forty four years, was himself likewise brought to witness his love to Christ by a similar testimony. He was put to death in the reign of Trajan (*A. D.* 107) at the advanced age of one hundred and twenty years, being first tortured upon the rack, and then crucified; and at the same time giving a bright evidence of a well-grounded faith, in the composure and unwearied patience with which he endured his exquisite torments."

As the Religion taught by the Scriptures consists of facts *and their uses*, we always regret to see any event recorded in sacred history separated from its obvious and declared design. We refer to the death of the Redeemer; which tho' made the most prominent and highly coloured picture in the volume before us, is unaccompanied by any account of the grand purpose for which it took place!

Nevertheless, the volume is well calculated to interest young people, and to convey to them, in pleasing and indelible impressions that knowledge of sacred history which they may not be disposed to receive from other modes of instruction. We therefore have no hesitation in adding, that those Parents and Guardians who wish to furnish the minds of the rising generation with knowledge of this kind, will find this work a very useful and acceptable present to their charge.

Religious Books lately published.

1. An Essay on the equity of divine government and the sovereignty of divine grace: Wherein particularly the latitudinarian hypothesis of indeterminate Redemption, and the antinomian notion of the divine decrees being the Rule of ministerial conduct, are carefully examined. by Edward Williams, D. D. 8vo. Burditt, 9*s bds.*

2. Letters and Conversational Remarks, by the late Rev. John Newton, Rector of St. Mary Woolnoth, Lombard Street, London: during the last 18 years of his life. 12mo. Burditt, 3*s* 6*d*

3. A Letter addressed to the Bishop of Peterborough in answer to an Appeal made to the Society for defending the Civil Rights of Dissenters relative to the important Question of Church Burial by the established Clergy. 2*s*

4. Sunday Papers, addressed to Youth, on the Importance of practical religion. 3*s*

THEOLOGICAL NOTICES.

☞ Information of works in hand from Theological Writers will be inserted under this Head.

The Rev. W. Bennett intends immediately to put to press his proposed "Essay on the Gospel Dispensation, considered in connection with God's moral Government of Men." in 2 parts, price, 5*s* in boards.

Mr. B. wishes it to be understood that his proposed *Essay* has no connection with the present controversy respecting the "Passive-Power Hypothesis."

A new and complete edition of Dr. Gill's Exposition of the Old and New Testament, in nine quarto volumes is in the press. It will be published in 18 monthly parts; the first of which will be ready this day. To be had of Dr. Rippon, and of the Booksellers. See the Advertisement on the 4th page of our covers.

A new edition of Lardner's works, carefully revised, is in great forwardness. It is calculated, they will be comprised in 32 parts, at 4*s* each, *to subscribers*, Part I. will appear this day.

RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.

TRANSLATION OF THE SCRIPTURES.

The Baptist Mission, as disinterested in design, and as strenuous in exertion, as any that the Christian world ever did or ever can employ for the conversion of idolaters, surpasses, beyond all comparison, all former missions, and all other undertakings, in the grand Article of translating the Bible into the language of the heathen. By a Memoir transmitted by the Missionaries at Serampore to their friends in England, in which they lay before them the "present state" of the translations, it appears that the Scriptures are in a course of translating and printing in 12 different languages, the most extensively used in the vast continent of India.

1. In the *Bengalee*, 2000 New Testaments have been distributed, 1000 copies of the Penteteuch, the Books of Job, Psalms, Ecclesiastes, and Canticles; another volume of all the Prophets is nearly ready, and the remaining historical Books, from Joshua to Nehemiah will soon be put to press.

2. In the *Orissa*, nearly the whole New Testament, and part of the Old is translated, and as far as the middle of Luke printed.

3. In the *Telinga* and *Kernata*, the translation is advanced thro' the first three Books of the New Testament.

4. In the *Guzzerattee*, the same progress has been made, and the first sheet of Matthew is printed off.

5. In the *Mahratta*, the New Testament is almost finished, with several Books of the Old; and the Gospel by Matthew is nearly printed.

6. 7. In *Hindoosthanee*, 2 versions were found necessary; in one of which the Books of Job, Psalms, and the Proverbs, and almost all the New Testament wait for revision: and in the other, the Gospel by Matthew is nearly printed.

8. In the language of the *Seeks*, the translation has advanced to the Gospel by John.

9. The *Sungskrit* version has proceeded so far that the four Gospels are already printed, in the Deva Nagree, the proper Sungskrit character.

10. In the *Persian*, they have been singularly avoured by retaining a person

HYMN

On 2 Corinthians viii, 9. Adapted to Missions.

He came from the mansions, the mansions on high,
From the throne, from the bosom of God;
The realms of adversity heard his first sigh,
In infancy's fragile abode.

Oh Bethlehem! thy manger once cradled that head,
Whence wisdom eternally sprung;
And pity assigned Him her lowliest bed,
On whom the vast universe hung.

Yes, moved by the grace of his infinite heart,
Alone in affliction he stood;
And deigned from the wealth of the God-head to part,
To pour it in treasures of blood.

Then haste, let the sons of calamity know,
We take from his mercies our plan;
And feel how Divinity stooped to the woe,
And banished the sorrows of man.

Hail, kindred Immortals! in regions of night,
We'll visit your desolate shore,
We'll send you his gospel, his gospel of light,
O take it—and perish no more!

S—

List of Lectures, &c. in and near London, for March.

5. *Lord's day Ev.* Broad St. Mr. Brooksbank. Shakespear's Walk, Charity Sermon.
6. *Mon. Ev.* Missionary Prayer Meeting, Paul Street.
9. *Thurs. M.* Monthly Meeting (Indep) at Mr. Barber's, Mr. Wall to preach. *The inseparable connection between true faith and good works.*

12. *Lord's day Ev.* Broad St. Mr. Collyer. Shakespear's Walk, Charity Sermon by Mr. Timothy Thomas.
17. *Thu. M.* Monthly Meeting (Baptist) at Dr. Rippon's, Mr. Dore to preach. *The seven Churches compared to seven golden candlesticks.*

19. *Lord's day Ev.* Broad St. Mr. Hutchings. Shakespear's Walk, Charity Sermon by Mr. Button.
23. *Fri. Ev.* Sermon to Young Persons at Barbican, by Mr. Dunn. *The character of Obadiah.*

26. *Lord's day Ev.* Broad St. Mr. Newman. Shakespear's Walk, Charity Sermon by Mr. Ford.

Erratum, Page 88, add to the last line, *in our con-*

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